

has been Miss Missouri Teen USA. On the night of August 22nd, this wonderful young lady was crowned Miss Teen USA 2001. For Marissa, who lives in my district, this coronation serves as a fitting accomplishment in a journey full of dedication and sacrifice.

"She's always been a leader since she was young" according to Marissa's aunt, Karen McHaney. Mrs. McHaney should know as well as anyone. McHaney took three-year-old Marissa in after Marissa's mother passed away due to a cerebral hemorrhage. Marissa and her family met the challenges of her loss. She has worked hard to achieve her new title of Miss Teen USA. Marissa volunteered at the Ronald McDonald House and a local Boys and Girls Club while competing in and winning four pageant events. In addition to maintaining her rigorous schedule as Miss Missouri Teen USA, she was still prepared for college and scheduled to begin classes at St. Louis University this fall until this most recent "detour." Her perseverance and vision to seek out and fulfill her dreams make Marissa an excellent role model not only for the young people of Missouri, but for youth across our country.

Marissa's home town is Springfield, Missouri. She has been featured in local media stories as she worked to represent young American women. Marissa's hard work and dedication are worth recognition and I'm confident she will continue to use her position of leadership to set a positive example to young people. I know my colleagues in the United States Congress wish her well as she begins this part of her life's journey.

HONORING MR. FELIX SPARKS

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Retired Brigadier General Felix Sparks, who proudly served our nation by leading a Colorado National Guard contingent into the European theater during World War II.

General Felix Sparks has seen and experienced the horrifying aspects of war that most of us cannot even imagine. Mr. Sparks has lost close friends in battle and although surrounded by death, his heroism shone throughout his service. Mr. Sparks was a member of the team of American soldiers who landed at Anzio and later he joined in liberating the Dachau concentration camp in 1945.

After serving his nation, Mr. Sparks moved to Colorado and attended law school at the University of Colorado. After his education, Felix served as a District Attorney for a seven-county judicial district in Colorado's Western Slope and also served as a Colorado Supreme Court Justice. Mr. Sparks is a first-class citizen who dedicated himself towards bettering Colorado both as a justice of the peace and as a commander of the Colorado National Guard.

Mr. Speaker, it is my pleasure to pay tribute to a distinguished Colorado citizen-soldier, Retired Brigadier General Sparks. On behalf of our nation and the great state of Colorado, I

EXTENSIONS OF REMARKS

offer Mr. Sparks my warmest regard and debts of gratitude.

IN HONOR OF MR. TONY VENTO

HON. DENNIS J. KUCINICH

OF OHIO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. KUCINICH. Mr. Speaker, I rise today to honor a truly wonderful humanitarian, Mr. Tony Vento, on his retirement from the Inter-Religious Task Force on Central America.

Mr. Tony Vento, Coordinator of the Inter-Religious Task Force on Central America, was born and raised in Ft. Lauderdale but soon left for Philadelphia to study Urban Studies with a focus in Community Development Planning and Architectural History. After his undergraduate work, Mr. Vento decided to accept a position as campus minister of the University of Pennsylvania and centered his work on peace, justice, and community service.

Mr. Vento's theological career led him down many winding paths, including trips to Italy, Peru, and the University of Toronto's St. Michael's College. His dedication to the furthering of democracy eventually brought him to the InterReligious Task Force on Central America, where he was hired as the Director in the fall of 1992. The task force uses education human rights work, and advocacy of peaceful policies to build bridges of hope and solidarity with the most consistently martyred region in our hemisphere.

Mr. Vento has been a true jewel for the InterReligious Task Force on Central America, and he will be greatly missed. His dedication and love for the people of Central America is extremely evident in the fine work he does. He will be soon joining Pax Christi USA to be their National Program Director.

Mr. Speaker, please join me in humbled recognition and celebration of Mr. Tony Vento. He has, and will continue to, inspire many not only in his local community, but across the globe.

50TH ANNIVERSARY OF AL-ANON

HON. JIM RAMSTAD

OF MINNESOTA

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. RAMSTAD. Mr. Speaker, shortly before the August District Work Period, this body passed H. Con. Res. 190, a resolution I offered commemorating September as National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month. The theme of Recovery Month this year is "We Recover Together: Family, Friends and Community."

Nothing epitomizes this theme better than the work of Al-Anon, which serves the family and friends of alcoholics.

Tomorrow in the Russell Senate Caucus Room, Al-Anon will sponsor a "Families in Recovery" luncheon celebrating Recovery Month. I urge my colleagues to attend this important event.

This is also the occasion of Al-Anon's 50th Anniversary. Congress should acknowledge

the many contributions of Al-Anon Family Groups to recovery in our nation.

Al-Anon Family Groups has been a source of help and hope for families and friends of alcoholics for 50 years in communities throughout the United States and worldwide.

Alateen is a part of Al-Anon for the younger family members. Both Al-Anon and Alateen freely cooperate with professional and government organizations in addressing family recovery. These are over 26,000 Al-Anon and Alateen groups around the world in 115 countries, and literature translated into 30 languages.

America owes a debt of gratitude to Al-Anon and Alateen.

Mr. Speaker, Congress should salute the Al-Anon Family Groups for its continued service to the family and friends of alcoholics in our nation. As a grateful recovering alcoholic of twenty years, I urge my colleagues to take this opportunity to affirm the remarkable efforts to the Al-Anon Family Groups.

HONORING DONAVAN CULLINGS UPON HIS RETIREMENT

HON. SCOTT McINNIS

OF COLORADO

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

Wednesday, September 5, 2001

Mr. McINNIS. Mr. Speaker, I would like to take this opportunity to pay tribute to Donavan Cullings for his many years of honorable service to the people of Creede, Colorado. Donavan has made the decision to retire from his position as a municipal judge and will be remembered for his years of dedication and time on the bench.

Mr. Cullings grew up in Los Angeles, California until he was inducted into military service immediately following high school. During World War II, he was involved in activities in the South Pacific for three years, diligently serving his country. After returning home, Donavan married his high school sweetheart, Jan Elton, and later joined the Los Angeles Police Department. He dedicated 26 years of his life to law enforcement and then moved to Creede where he bought the Creede Drug Store.

The town of Creede eventually had a vacant Marshal position, and Donavan decided to fill that role for eight years willingly. He also served as the County Coroner for 15 years. Another calling attracted Donavan and he answered it by accepting the job of Town Magistrate for Creede, where he honorably served as a municipal judge for 15 years.

Mr. Speaker, Donavan Cullings has led a life to strengthen the fabric of the American character whether it be in troubled waters abroad or at home. His vigorous efforts deserve the praise and admiration of us all. As part of his retirement, Donavan will volunteer two days a week at Creede Museum and educate others about Creede's long-standing history. I would like to extend my warmest regards to Donavan upon his retirement and wish him and his family the best in many years to come.